

2 October 1987
MLD-7035

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

FROM : Chief, FBIS London Bureau

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- London Bureau -- September 1987

I. GENERAL

1. BBC operators have begun training on the new computer-driven control system which will allow full use of the two 11-meter C-Band steerable antennas at Crowsley Park. Cruising operations on the dishes are tentatively scheduled to begin in late October.
2. In another BBC development, Director General [] announced early in the month that the BBC is considering radical new ways to raise extra money and that it has "put away its begging bowl." The bureau plans to take this under advisement in future dealings with the Monitoring Service over questions related to payments for our respective modernization programs.
3. Islamabad Unit: Regional engineer [] visited the unit late in the month to look into growing BBC complaints over problems with Islamabad feeds. He corrected a number of technical faults, with the result that BBC noted a definite improvement in both the quality and quantity of monitorable transmissions. The London bureau chief, who was in Islamabad at the same time, obtained permission from the Embassy to erect a new longwire antenna for improved Tehran mediumwave reception. By month's end, the pole for the new antenna had been installed with completion awaiting receipt of cabling from Vienna Bureau.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The bureau editorial staff and BBC received praise from Chief/Operations Group during the month for the handling of SED General Secretary Honecker's 7-11 September FRG visit. Bureau coverage included a special roundup of East European treatment of the visit. Cologne Unit was also included in the Headquarters praise for its contribution in covering the visit.
2. A message from Headquarters relaying State Department thanks for "extraordinarily timely" reporting on Afghanistan and citing continuing intense interest in Afghanistan was passed to the BBC as further proof of our need for an extra effort from the Pashto/Dari team.

3. Headquarters thanks for bureau reportage on the coup in Burundi were passed to BBC's East African Unit. Receipt of material from the unit has improved with the upgrade of its circuit during the month from 50 to 75 baud.
4. PMU was in coordination with Jordan and Nicosia Bureaus during the month in an attempt to improve Arabic press coverage allocation. On 10 September PMU resumed coverage of AL-SHARQ AL-ASWAT, thus consolidating all London-based Arabic press coverage at PMU. Effective 1 October, PMU will relinquish coverage of Cairo AL-WAFD to Jordan to facilitate Egyptian coverage and coordination and will assume coverage of three Saudi papers no longer available in Amman.

B. Communications

1. Trouble-free installation of the Autodin KG-84 equipment was carried out on 17 September. The bureau engineering staff had prepared for the installation in advance by laying all the necessary wiring and installing an isolated jackfield which will ensure a smooth shift to conventional transmissions in the event of KG-84 equipment failure. The actual cutover date, which is contingent on the Croughton ASC, is expected to be in early October.
2. After extensive coordination with Austria and Headquarters, the bureau on 22 September switched its Frederick 1403 tape reader from the Vienna VCVC backup to the Headquarters dedicated circuit. This shift was necessary to provide automatic numbering to ease transmission to the unforgiving Headquarters AFS system during backstop situations. Subsequent tests with Vienna have shown that it has no problem receiving manually transmitted channel numbers via an ASR. We will be receiving an additional Frederick 1403 from Bangkok in the coming months to use as a spare for the dedicated line.
3. On the 29th London Bureau began protecting Vienna-originated copy "until further notice," while they attempt to solve a garbling problem on their primary circuit.
4. Internet: The bureau received authorization during the month from the British Office of Telecommunications to use the Dantel orderwire on the Internet system.

C. Lateral Services

1. In what appears to be a growing trend, the bureau handled a number of ad hoc requests throughout the month for video recordings from various sources. Services included 5 hours of Moscow TV for training purposes for the U.S. 6988th Electronic Surveillance Unit at RAF Mildenhall; an ITV documentary on Lebanon for Headquarters consumers, the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and, last but not least, for the BBCMS ✓

general manager; Warsaw TV footage on Vice President Bush's Poland visit for a Headquarters consumer; and responding to a priority headquarters request for an Internet feed of a Moscow TV report on the anniversary of IL-62 flights. We also relayed to Headquarters a request from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow for some Moscow TV footage not covered by the bureau. Cologne Unit also got into the act by responding to a request from LRB for express delivery of an FRG TV interview with Chaos Computer Club hackers.

2. At the request of a Secret Service officer in London as part of the advance party for the Vice President's visit, the bureau editorial staff and PMU collected relevant reportage on Bush's European tour and passed it to the advance party at the U.S. Embassy.

D. Technical

1. The IBM PC's used for header preparation have been replaced with Victor VPC II hardware supplied by Headquarters. The Victors have been equipped with "sixpackplus" PC boards removed from the IBM computers. In another automation-related development, non-glare lamp fittings have been installed in all rooms where personal computers are being used.
2. The bureau TV Room has been upgraded with new 5630 VCR's, monitors and tuners to make life easier for the technicians involved in meeting the growing demand for video recordings. Digital timers have been fitted to and installed in racks, thus freeing up badly needed space in this area. One of the old monitors from the TV Room has been installed in PMU and a BBC UHF feed set up to meet a longstanding PMU requirement for access to Moscow TV. The second monitor has been placed in the chief editor's office as part of a TV monitoring station for use by editors when processing from UK TV.
3. Thanks to an influx of year-end money, the bureau was able to replace its aging copiers as well as two Facit printers on the Autodin terminals. The replacement of the two Model 4540 Facit's with the current 4542 printers has eliminated a potentially serious problem caused by the growing scarcity of spares for the 4540's. We also procured an E-Prom programmer for fabricating bureau-designed equipment, saving us from the inconvenience of constantly borrowing from the BBC.
4. The final bit of year-end money was used to contract for cabling and installation of new signal feed cables for use when the BBC takes possession of the new building and begins internal cabling work in preparation for moving the BBC technical plant into this area sometime in the late fall or early winter.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

1. The bureau received Headquarters approval for the new FBN wagescale on 11 September. The new rates, which will be implemented retroactively to 5 July, will appear in the 8 October paychecks.
2. Senior editor [] arrived PCS on 17 September, the last new arrival for 1987.
3. Administrative assistant [] was married on 5 September. The new [] is now back at work after her honeymoon in Majorca.
4. Teletype operator [] became the proud father of a 6 pound 3 ounce baby girl on 19 September.

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IV. VISITS

To the bureau: Junior editor [redacted] on 2 September for bureau familiarization en route to Mbabane PCS; Nicosia Bureau chief monitor [redacted] on the 4th for satellite talks with the BBC; U.S. Department of Agriculture Senior Market Analyst [redacted] on the 10th to thank the bureau for past reporting and brief us on current requirements; B&F officer [redacted] 10-11 September for talks at the bureau and embassy; DRD editor [redacted] on 14-15 September for bureau familiarization; Vienna Bureau engineer [redacted] 14-18 September for talks with the bureau and the BBC en route to Islamabad; RECD engineers [redacted] on the 21st for preliminary discussions on the bureau consolidation; Production Group Russian linguist [redacted] on 21 and 22 September for substantive talks in PMU; and [redacted] on 25 September for a bureau tour and discussions on Polish coverage.

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From the bureau: Admin Officer [] to Paris 7-9 September to join Admin Staff TDY'ers in discussions with RAMC; Bureau engineer [] to headquarters 21-25 September to participate in FBN Orientation Week; and Bureau Chief [] to Islamabad 20-24 September and Cologne 28-30 September for routine management visits.

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V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Islamabad: Unit Chief [redacted] raised \$662 for the International School of Islamabad when he made 241 out of 250 foul shots during a basketball fundraiser sponsored by the school.

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Attachments

cc: Chief, Austria Bureau
Chief, Cologne Unit
Chief, Islamabad Unit
Chief, Okinawa Bureau